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A

LETTER

To the REVEREND

Mr. *M A S S E Y*,

Occasion'd by his Late Wonderful

SERMON

AGAINST

INOCULATION.



L O N D O N :

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Reverend SIR,



BEFORE I proceed to consider what you have advanced against Inoculation, I shall offer somewhat in Defense of that Practice.

'Tis an Unhappiness attending human Nature, that amongst other Evils, we are exposed to the violent Attacks of so fatal an Enemy as the Small-Pox: And how great a Destroyer this Disease is among us in particular, our Weekly Bills are sufficient Proof. To discover any Method therefore to banish this Distemper out of the World; or if that can't be done, to prevent its fatal Effects, wou'd, no doubt, be a valuable Service done to Mankind. All Diseases are not to be removed by gentle, pleasant Means: Continuance in Life and Health very frequently depends on our Submission to rough and ungrateful Treat-

ment. But as long as the Remedy is preferable to the Disease 'tis designed to remove or prevent, every wise Man will purchase, at an high Price, so valuable an Enjoyment.

The least Skill in Medicine, or the slightest Observation of its Success, will abundantly convince us, that this noble Art is attended with no small Uncertainty : Even those Methods, which of all others most frequently prove successful, are often found not to effect the desired Cure. But what can we conclude from this, That we should reject all Physick ? Certainly No ; unless for the same Reason we renounce our Food too. It is therefore no valid Objection against any Physical Practice, that in all Instances, it is not attended with the like happy Effects.

But some will think there is a mighty Difference between removing and preventing a Distemper ; and tho' they willingly submit to an hazardous Experiment, in order to remove an Ailment they already labour under, yet they would by no means expose themselves to any present Danger, in order to prevent a future Evil. This Opinion, I own, is very just, when the Hazard of the Experiment is greater than that of the Disease, all Things considered : No wise Man therefore would take a dangerous Preservative, against a Distemper, which very seldom happen'd, and rarely proved fatal. But we all know how destructive and common a Disease the Small-Pox is : And you, Sir, P. 6. tell us, 'tis " *a Disease incident to most Men* ". Now Inoculation is seldom propos'd, excepting when the Small-Pox is already raging in any Place ; and when People are in great Danger of being infected in the ordinary Way. Inoculation

tion therefore having been found very successful, it may, no doubt, be lawfully continued, at least till future Experiments shall demonstrate it to be a dangerous Practice.

To prove that Inoculation has been successful, I chuse to appeal to Dr. *Nettleton's* fair and impartial Account; by which it appears, that of Forty Persons inoculated, but one miscarry'd; and this too was owing to his receiving it after the common manner, first: Sixteen were afterwards inoculated, who all did well. Nor were the Symptoms here so violent, as are most frequently seen in this Distemper, when natural. Many other Instances are not wanting to confirm the like Success.

I am sensible it may be here demanded, That I not only shew, that Persons who have been inoculated have safely recover'd, but also that by this Means they are secured from all Danger of the Return of this Distemper in the natural way. In Answer to this, I must observe, that tho' many have undergone this Operation, yet there is not an Instance alledged, of the Return of this Distemper upon any one of them in the natural way: And not only Experience, but Reason also induces us to believe this an effectual Preservative against all future Attacks of this Disease. For 'tis certain, that far the greater Number of those who have been invaded by the Small-Pox, have receiv'd it by Infection from others: That is, the contagious Particles have insinuated themselves thro' certain Pores, and by mixing with the Mass of Blood have corrupted it, which Corruption is thrown out in Pustules upon the Body; and this Process is found, by undoubted Experience, to render Men secure from
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the same Distemper for the future. And in what does Inoculation differ from this? Is it not a conveying the like Matter into the Blood; Matter of the same Kind? and does it not in all other Respects produce the like Effects? Why then should it be thought to differ so widely in this one respect, that one should for ever prevent the Return of the Disease, and the other not? There can no Cause of this Difference be assign'd; and therefore we may conclude, that Reason and Experience will justify the asserting, that Inoculation is a Preservative against future Infection.

The imprudent Choice of some of the Subjects on whom this Operation has been performed, is the great Cause of most of that Outcry which is raised against it. But the only just Conclusion from those Experiments is, That they should not be made upon Persons in the like Circumstances. For as to others, it can be no more a Reason why it should not be tried upon them, than it is, that the *Cortex* should not be used in any Case, because it proves hurtful when administer'd in a Paroxysm. Now if we abstract those who were improper Subjects, the Success of this Method has been very considerable. But even suppose, in the Infancy of the Practice, there should be some Mistakes committed, and in some few Instances it should prove unsuccessful, this can hardly be thought a sufficient Reason for exploding the Operation altogether. We bring no Knowledge of Medicine into the World with us, nor can we expect any by way of Inspiration; the only Means of acquiring it, then, must be by proper Experiments, and just Reasoning from them: But shou'd every new Attempt be immediately rejected, because it fails in some few

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few Instances, when it has a Train of Successes to recommend it, the most approved Methods of Cure, must have been for ever thrown by and neglected. And if the Patrons of a new Experiment must be exclaim'd against as "*diabolical Sorcerers, bellish Venefici, and Enemies of Mankind*, I know not who will endeavour to improve the Art of Healing, or study to render our Health more lasting, and our Lives more happy.

The successful Use of Inoculation in other Parts of the World, was a just Inducement to make the Experiment among us; especially when Criminals, upon their own Choice, were the first who underwent it. You are pleas'd, P. 14. to represent this as something worse than any Racks and Tortures that Men have contrived for the greatest Criminals. But yet these Wretches thankfully preferr'd it to Hanging; and I believe any Man in the like Circumstances, even Mr. M. himself, would approve their Choice: So severe were the Agonies they underwent!

Abundance of People have, by their Teachers, been made stupid enough to believe, that though Inoculation should uncontestably appear to be a safe Preservative against all the Danger usual in the Small-Pox, and consequently very beneficial to Mankind; that yet it is a Practice contrary to the Principles of Religion, and therefore ought to be the Abhorrence of every godly Soul. So little are they acquainted with the Nature of a truly Divine Religion, which never can discourage any Practice conducive to the Good of Mankind. You are not ignorant, who are the Persons that teach and propagate such false and pernicious Notions of Religion. You have instructed

Instructed them to say, that *God has ordain'd the Physician to cure our Diseases, not to create them.* The Doctors are to heal our Distempers, and they can have no Call to inflict them; or, in your Stile, *they want a competent Authority so to do.* But little do such Persons, or your self, consider, that since unmix'd Felicity is not our present Lot; the universal Love we owe Mankind, obliges us to remove as much of the Bitter as we can. And can this be more effectually done; than by proper Methods totally to vanquish the Distempers we are expos'd to, or at least abate their Force, and render their Assaults less dangerous? Should future Successes still farther recommend Inoculation to us, and larger Experience convince us, that so fatal an Enemy as this, might be deprived of his Power to destroy; I hope, for the Honour of the Clergy, none who sustain that Character, will bear so strong an Enmity to Mankind, as to discourage this beneficial Practice.

Could this formidable Distemper be charmed away with a Word, or could one pleasant Dose disarm it of its Poison, and render it no longer a Messenger of Death, we should be still more happy; but as this at present appears impossible, we must contentedly submit to Confinement for a few Days, bear the Warmth of a short-liv'd Fever, and behold some fading Pustules on our Skin. Freedom from so dangerous a Disease, is a cheap Purchase upon these easy Terms. There can be no Objection against this Practice, but what concludes with equal Force against applying a Blister, or opening a Vein, if either of these would prevent the Assaults of a Disease: The only Difference is, that the Disorder rais'd by

by the one is of a somewhat longer Continuance, and somewhat more dangerous than that of the other. Yet I can hardly think any Man in his Senses, would assert it was criminal to prevent the Small-Pox by the Application of a Vesicatory. Why then should the other be supposed an *Antiprovidential Project*, that insults our Religion, and banishes Providence out of the World? As this Practice hitherto appears to be a safe Preservative, and consequently highly beneficial, 'tis not only allowed, but required by the Law of Nature.

The Scripture indeed, not being designed to instruct us in Physick, does not expressly command it; but its general Precepts, *as we have Opportunity, to do good unto all Men*, not only justify but recommend it to us. And Mr. *Massey* will vouch it, has not one Syllable to discountenance it: For after a great Enquiry for a Text, that had at least an Appearance against it, he is at length forced to tell us, Inoculating is contrary to Scripture, *for the Devil smote Job with sore Boils*.

That Antidotes are lawful, has, for ought I know, been the universal Opinion of Mankind. 'Tis noted to a Proverb, That Prevention is better than Cure. In many other Cases, besides that of Infection, Antidotes are made use of, without any Scruple, by Persons of the greatest Virtue. And tho' Inoculation does raise some Pustules on the Body, that can never render it sinful, any more than flinging out a Distemper, in order to prevent its seizing on the Vitals, is unlawful. The only Difference is, that one is done to prevent a near Danger, and the other, to provide against one, perhaps, somewhat more re-

mote. That Inoculation is not so easy, and pleasant, and infallible an Antidote as we could wish, is the only Objection can be raised against it. But all we can conclude from hence is, that we must submit to this, as Travellers are content with mean Accommodations and coarse Entertainment when no better can be had. 'Tis scarcely to be expected that this Method should prove universally successful, and never surprize us with one Disappointment. Human Affairs don't run so smoothly on. And therefore tho' we do see it fail in some few Instances, this can be no valid Objection against it, if vast Odds are on the other Side; as is really the Case.

And now, Sir, I come to consider what you have thought fit to advance against this Practice. It will be a sufficient Apology for my tracing you through the insolent Absurdities you have crowded into this Discourse now before me, to remind you, that since the Usurpations of the Priests upon the Rights of Mankind have been so very numerous and prejudicial, we can't oppose any such Attempts of that Nature, with too warm a Zeal, or too firm a Resolution. While they keep within the Bounds prescribed them by their great Lord and Master, the Prince of Peace; while they don't lord it over our Faith, or usurp the Dominion of our Consciences, but act as humble Ministers, and peaceable Helpers of our Joy, Respect and Honour is due unto them: But if they presume, when Ignorance and Assurance are their only Qualifications, to dictate to us in the Management of civil Affairs, or authoritatively prescribe in Medicine; to check their Insolence and oppose their Encroachments, is Treatment

ment they justly deserve, as well as an indispensable Duty we owe to Mankind. I am sorry your late Performance should have given Occasion for such Reflections. You attempt to impress the Minds of the People with a superstitious Dread of a Practice, which for ought you can prove, may be very serviceable; and then excite their Passion, and inflame their Rage against the Authors and Promoters of it, whom you treat with a World of Pride and ill Manners: And even while you display your own Ignorance, make no Scruple to load Learned Gentlemen, who aimed at the Good of Mankind, with Slander and Reproach. Such Conduct as this, render'd it absolutely necessary to curb so haughty a Dictator, and answer him according to his Folly.

You are pleased to call this notable Performance of yours, *A Sermon against the dangerous and sinful Practice of Inoculation*: Yet after all is over, in a Postscript you tell us, you consider Inoculation not as dangerous, but as it is sinful; "*I meddle not in this Matter otherwise than as it seems to me irreligious.*" And really your Discourse is of so odd a Contexture, that I don't wonder you should be uncertain what Conclusion to draw from it; for I defy any Man living to make it consistent with it self: Such a masterly Hand you have at Contradiction, as we shall see in the Sequel. I must, however, do you the Justice to own, that tho' in many Places you have advanced Things very weak and inconclusive, yet are they all carefully contradicted in some other Parts of the Sermon.

A grand Objection against Inoculation is its being Diabolical; for "*the Devil inoculated Job,*"

P. 6. And P. 15. "*Remembering our Text I shall*

"not scruple to call it *Diabolical*." You seem so fond of this Whim, that I shan't rob you of the Pleasure of believing it; but only tell you, 'tis so very merry an Argument, that I never heard it mentioned without a Smile, either by the Friends or Enemies to this Practice. Afterwards indeed, you appear somewhat uncertain in the History of the Matter; for P. 15. it loses all Claim to Antiquity, and becomes entirely "*a modern Practice. No body but a present Set of adventurous Practitioners, who have of late pretended to assume that Authority, ever caused immediate Sickneſs, or ſentenced Men to lie languishing in a Fever.*" I muſt here obſerve, that this primitive Inoculator of yours has ſome extraordinary Favour ſhewn him, P. 12. You can make a Moral of the Devil himſelf; while the preſent Practitioners in the ſame Method, "*are only Forgers of Lies, and Phyſicians of no Value,*" P. 18.

But, P. 13. you are coming to the Point, and "*are to prove, that Diſeaſes are utterly unlawful to be inflicted by any who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians:*" that is, no doubt, you are going to produce ſome unanſwerable Texts from the Bible; for nothing elſe is peculiar to Chriſtians: And accordingly you do give us two Inſtances from Scripture. But of what? Why, being about to prove Diſeaſes may not be inflicted, you tell us two of the choſen Servants of the Lord, *Moses* and *Eliſha*, did inflict them with Divine Approbation, (Appointment in the Caſe of *Gebazi* there was not), and then boldly aſſert, that others may not follow their Example; but give no other Reaſon, except Poſitive Aſſertions are ſuch, but that they did it. Your notorious Blunders, as a
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Divine, in this place, I shall take notice of afterwards, among others of the same Sort.

Your next Undertaking is to prove, That Inoculation has a direct Tendency to anticipate and banish Providence out of the World. What strange Notions have you of Providence, to think an Injury or a Favour done by one Man to another, is to banish Providence out of the whole World! But let us hear your Reasoning. That you might trace this Matter to the Bottom, and shew your deep Penetration, you begin to prove your Point thus, P. 16. " 1. *Physical Power does not infer a Moral one*". True; no more than consummate Impudence does a good Understanding, or a Black Gown a Learned Divine. Here you advance the same undeniable Truth in several different Expressions; namely, that all unjustifiable Arts and Practices are prohibited: Upon this Head you are very large. But that you might not dwell too long upon every thing, you don't offer one single Argument to prove the Practice you write against, is of that Sort. How often are we told, unlawful Actions are not to be committed upon any Account; but when Inoculation should be proved to be such, you are altogether silent, unless these Words are designed for that purpose, P. 17. "*We ought to forbear an Experiment of that Sort; for Uncertainty and Doubting, in Moral and Religious Cases, lays a positive, or at least a prudent Restraint upon Practice; because, as the Apostle says, Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*". But how great is that Clearness of Thought, which could so judiciously confound Doubts about the Lawfulness of an Action, with our Ignorance or Uncertainty of the Event. We can't be sure it will succeed in every Instance; therefore, say you, this Uncertainty

tainty lays a Restraint upon us in all Cases. Does not Inoculation stand upon the same footing with other Medicines, which are all found to fail in some Instances? And can you think the Apostle's Rule forbids the whole Art of Physick? Had the eating of Blood been your Subject, you might have told us, *Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*; but what it has to do with Inoculation, I believe your self can scarcely discern.

But that you might not fatigue us with too long a Train of Reasoning, in the next Sentence we are relieved with a Specimen of your Wit; a pretty Antithesis worthy of your self; for you tell us, "*Had the Patient of our Text followed the Advices given him, the Remedy had been worse than the Disease; and what the foolish Prescriber would have given for good Physick, the unhappy Patient would have found miserable Divinity.*" P. 21. you divert us again, when you tell us, "*There is no great Difference between the Devil's Temptation to our Saviour, and the Temptation before us, (viz. Inoculation:)* Both intimate the Safety of the Practice. But when you are writing against Inoculation, to call the Harlot, whom Solomon describes, a Disease-giving Practitioner, is so very witty a Piece of Satyr, that I believe none but your self could be the ridiculous Author of it.

But I proceed to consider your other Arguments against Inoculation. Your next, were it true, would be a conclusive one; for you don't blush to tell us, P. 18. "*The confessed Miscarriages in this new Method are more than have happen'd in the ordinary way.*" But I defy you to name the Man, that ever made you such a Confession. Had you enquired ever so little into this Matter, you would have found the contrary; and

and if you did not examine, with what Face could you assert it? especially when you seem to believe the contrary within a few Pages. For, P. 24. you suppose this Practice to promote Vice, by lessening the Motives against it. You assert, that the Small-Pox in the ordinary way being very dangerous, keeps Men virtuous; if Inoculation be still more dangerous, it can't encourage the Practice of Vice. For you can't say, their having once safely undergone this Operation, secures them from future Infection, and thereby lessens their Caution, and excites them to Extravagancies; because you once and again expressly assert, 'tis no Security against future Infection. And therefore, as you assert, it has a Tendency to encourage Vice, you must suppose it less dangerous than the ordinary way. Nay, P. 29. you allow Infidels to be inoculated, whose Expectations are confined to this World. "Let the Atheist then and the Scoffer, the Heathen and Unbeliever disclaim a Dependence upon Providence——Let them inoculate and be inoculated, whose Hope is only in and for this Life." Which must imply, that Inoculation is advantageous in this Life, tho', being sinful, 'tis prejudicial in the next. You must agree with me, that to thrust your self into this Controversy, under so great Ignorance and Uncertainty in your Subject, is a very strong Proof of your uncommon Modesty, and good Understanding. You can't be ignorant, since the publick Papers inform'd you, that some of the Royal Family underwent this Operation; and tho' I own this is no Reason for an absolute Silence upon this Head, yet it was methinks a sufficient Reason for your informing your self of the Success of the Practice, before you pass'd so severe a Sentence upon it; and

and renders inexcusable your gross Scurrility, in representing those as so many Atheists, who submitted to it. How insolent does it render such Rant as this: "*Let the Atheist and the Scoffer, the Heathen and Unbeliever disclaim a Dependence upon Providence, dispute the Wisdom of God's Government, and deny Obedience to his Laws: Let them inoculate and be inoculated, whose Hope is only in and for this Life; but let us,*" &c.

The next Thing that seems against Inoculation, is in these Words: P. 19. "*I cannot apprehend, how it conduces to the Preservation of Mankind, to force a dangerous Distemper upon them, which possibly may never happen unto them; and if it should, may probably be attended with very little, if any Inconvenience.*" Here again we find you contradicting your self; for what is the very Definition you give, P. 6. of this Disease, which possibly may never happen to Mankind, but a Distemper incident to most Men? What is here so inconsiderable a thing, which, if it should happen, may probably be attended with very little, if any, Inconvenience, is in the 24th Page, the most formidable thing on Earth: "*No thing so universally dreaded,*" are your own Words concerning it; and even while you are lessening the Danger of the Disease in the common way, you represent it as very dangerous, if conveyed by Inoculation, "*to force a dangerous Distemper upon them;*" tho' you can't but judge them at least equally dangerous. You may think as lightly as you please of the Small-Pox, when it makes for your Argument, but abundant melancholly Instances are not wanting to prove it a very great Destroyer; and therefore a less dangerous Preservative, as Inoculation certainly is, may very justly be preferr'd before it. Your
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Simile of a strong City surrendring now, least possibly it should be taken hereafter, does not come up to the *Case*; for since, as you assert, 'tis a Disease incident to most Men, it is *very probable* I shall be overta'en by it; and therefore 'tis the wisest Course, by an early Capitulation, to get better Terms, and to provide for my Safety as well as I can. This is not bringing on a Disease, lest possibly it should invade me hereafter; but a prudent Choice of a safe, tho' somewhat unpleasant, Preservative against a much greater, and very probable Malady.

In the next place, P. 20. you tell us this Matter is forbidden by the Sixth Command, as lascivious Thoughts by the Seventh. And here you very justly observe, that tho' the Homicide be casual, yet if the Cause of it be criminal, it is sufficient to render a Man guilty. No doubt, if the Cause be criminal; but that is the thing you should have proved of Inoculation: Certainly if it be a criminal Practice, it renders Men guilty. But how does it appear that it is so? The Proof of this is shifted, and you only exclaim against tempting God. P. 21. "*We must not presume upon God's Protection, to expose our selves to any unnecessary Danger or Difficulty—If we seek for a Disease, we can have no rational Dependence upon God's Blessing.*" 'Tis certain, we ought not to expose ourselves to any unnecessary Danger; but I contend the Method in Dispute is not of that Sort. You forget you are writing against Inoculation: You should prove that this is exposing our selves to Danger without a sufficient Reason, and not cry out in the general against the Impiety of tempting God. If this Practice is really a tempting God, no doubt 'tis criminal: But how does it appear that it is so?

Certainly it is not tempting God, to undergo a present Inconvenience, or expose our selves to a smaller Danger, which frees us from a much greater, and very probable Evil, tho' somewhat more remote. If acquiring a future Advantage by a present Hazard be so criminal, the Blessings of Peace should never be purchased at the Expence of a Battel, nor can we expect the Almighty Lord should go with our Armies into the Field. And in the Case before us, 'tis not running our selves into unnecessary Danger, but only meeting our Enemy when we are prepared for the Rencontre, and not suffering him to make a violent Attack upon us, when we are become too weak and unable to resist his Assaults. I must tell you again, 'tis not seeking a Disease, but a Preservative against a very dangerous one. You might as justly call a Sweat or the Bath, a Salivation, or a Blister, Diseases; when they are design'd to remove or prevent some bad Symptom, as give that Name to the Practice in Dispute. I must only desire you to consider, whether if Inoculation be found a successful Preservative against a dangerous Distemper, it may not justly be esteemed a tempting of God, to cast our selves upon Providence, and neglect that Method of Cure, which God has provided as Means of our Escape, but we thro' Distrust or Contempt think fit to neglect?

Another Argument against Inoculation is, That we live in such degenerate Times, that, as you assert, P. 22. "*Mankind rely too much upon themselves, and put their Trust in one another, without calling upon God for his Assistance, or praying to him to guide and direct them. Under these two Temptations, the Practice I condemn is fairly to be ranked.*" You afterwards take notice, that

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Forms of Grace are neglected; and from thence you might as well have concluded, that all eating of Victuals is unlawful, as that Inoculation is so, because Men don't call upon God before they perform the Operation. But I desire to know, what either the one or the other of these have to do with the Question about Inoculation. You could only mention this to inflame the Populace against the Patrons of that Method, when you tell us, P. 23. "*Usages of Piety are run out of Countenance in the Age in which we live.*" To pitch upon the Friends of Inoculation, as Persons peculiarly guilty, is as good a Mark of your Christian Charity, as it is an undeniable Proof of your Candor and Fairness in managing a Controversy. But I must do you the Justice to remark, that this is an Argument (and I think the only one) you have not contradicted in some other Part of your Sermon: But the Reason is plain, 'tis only made up of Scandal, and in this you are consistent and uniform.

But the grand Argument comes in the Rear; "*For in the last place, this modern Practice (at least as old as Job) tends to promote Vice and Immorality.*" A heavy Charge indeed! How does your Wisdom make it good? Why this Disease, which in the 19th Page was so very a Trifle, and might possibly never happen; and if it did, probably occasion little or no Inconvenience, is now increased to the most frightful thing we are acquainted with, "*nothing so universally dreaded*"; insomuch that the Fear of it is a happy Restraint upon many People, and keeps them in "*Health, Wealth, and Innocence.*" But still this does not render your Argument compleat; for you have told us once and again, P. 18 and 19. That Inoculation is no Defence against future Infection,

fection, and therefore can't render Men more secure and careless than they would otherwise be. But however, another Contradiction does the Business, which rather than spoil the Reasoning, you have generously given, declaring, that the Method which was so full of Miscarriages, is, P. 27. become "*a saving Anti-providential Project*;" and unless you had asserted this, you could not have added, as you do, "*which thus tends, in a great measure, to prevent that religious Watchfulness which Christianity, as a Warfare, requires.*" 'Tis, you say, no Fence against future Danger; and yet it frees Men from the Fears of it. Are you not ashamed thus to trouble the World with your aukward Sentiments and incoherent Notions, upon a Subject in which Men of Sense and Learning are divided. But you go on and tell us, that Diseases being inflicted by Providence, we should not endeavour to remove them. 'Tis absurd and impious to call in the Assistance of Art to support decaying Nature, or remove the Distempers that weaken its Strength, or shorten its Course. P. 27. "*No doubt Providence has a good and beneficial Design in all those Deaths, which we improperly call untimely.*" What Reason then for this saving, this Anti-providential Project.—"*Shou'd we not rather endure our present Estate, whatsoever it be, as we pass thro' a hard Winter, or a time of foul Weather, taking it for reasonable and fit, because the wise Author of Nature has so ordered and appointed it.*" Our patient Submission to the Disposals of Heaven, were never thought to exclude our seeking Relief: The Weather we can't alter, 'tis in vain to attempt it; but must we therefore neglect those Remedies which God has provided to remove, or prevent our bodily Pain. Yes, say you, we shou'd

shou'd endure our present Estate: P. 26. *If Men should happen to be more healthy, 'tis a great Chance they would be less righteous; and yet, P. 22. Honour becomes due to the Physician for making our Lives more healthy. The Honour due to a Physician arises from his being an Instrument to restore Health and prolong Life.*

You tell us, Page 25. "Could these bold Practitioners lessen the Severity of the Disease; could they entirely secure Men from Danger under it, I do not see what good Mankind would get in the main, since it would be the Occasion of their running into a great many Dangers": Could I then by one pleasant Dose cure this Distemper, I ought not to communicate the dangerous Secret, but deprive Mankind of so valuable a Discovery, lest some senseless Clown should be encouraged to drink a Pot of Ale more than he would otherwise have ventured upon. Must we forbear doing good to Men of Virtue, because some wicked Persons may perhaps make an ill Use of it. The Almighty does not thus withhold his Benefits, because some ungrateful and wicked Men are found to misimprove them. Tho' you are pleased to call the Fear of the Small-Pox a happy Restraint, yet I believe were it put to your Choice, you would reject even the constant Enjoyment of this Felicity. Besides, the Fear of this Disease may as well deter Men from a virtuous Action that exposes them to it, as frighten them from those Vices which may possibly bring it on. For I must observe to you, that Men of the strictest Virtue and Probity are invaded by this Destroyer, which has deprived the World of many useful Members of Society. And therefore being an Evil which alike makes its Attacks upon the Wicked and the Good,

is very improper to be pitch'd upon as a Discouragement to Vice. To remove this Distemper is taking away one of the Miseries to which human Nature is obnoxious, not destroying a Sanction of the Divine Law, as you would seem to represent it.

I have now gone through all that you have offered against Inoculation; and have not to my Knowledge omitted any Thing that in the least seemed to condemn that Practice. You are very averse to come to the Point; for after Six Pages spent upon an Introduction, entirely foreign to your Subject, you tell us, "*and so we are come to the Words of the Text,*" P. 6. And when you touch upon the Matter in Debate, having once or twice strongly asserted the Thing you should have proved, you fill up with Invectives what you wanted in Argument.

However, having considered you as a Disputant in Medicine, to enquire a little how able a Divine you are, can't be improper. For if we find you an accomplish'd Divine, your Mistakes in any other Science have a juster Claim to Forgiveness; though we must censure your Intrusion and Weakness in meddling with Things beyond the Reach of your Understanding. You must excuse the Freedom of this plain Truth, that as bad Physician as you are, without doubt you are a still worse Divine.

Would any Man, who did not design to ridicule the Bible, have chosen your Text against Inoculation. You say the 6th Commandment forbids it. Why did you not preach upon that? An express Command was given to Satan, not to touch Job's Person; and P. 2. you "*look upon this to have been almost as great a Temptation as*"
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"the spoiling of his Substance, or the Slaughter of his Children; because the Survival of any great Misfortune is esteemed the greater Unhappiness of the Two." But so settled are your Principles of Religion, that within three Pages you change them, and assert, P. 5. " 'twas hard upon Job to be deprived of his worldly Goods, harder to be bereaved of his Children, hardest of all, when these were gone to be yet worse handled in his Person." * It was a great Misfortune not to have his Person touch'd, and yet when his Person is assaulted, this is the greatest Unhappiness of all. You can't say this Misery arose from Job's knowing he suffered all this in vain, and that his Disease would not procure his Death; for you assert in this very Page, "tho' Job's Life was to be preserved, yet it was more than Job knew."

We are commonly apt to imagine, that what is done by our natural Powers is according to, and within the Reach of Nature: To do a Thing as a Man, is to do a Thing according to Nature. But you are pleased to lead us out of this vulgar Error, and inform us, P. 2. "To feel sorrow as a Man, and assuage it as a wise Man, is a Strain above Nature, and (I imagined you were going to say, is derived from some higher Principle, but you ingeniously add) properly constitutes that passive Virtue call'd Patience." How deep is that Insight into Nature, which could tell us, that to bear Afflictions as a Man, is above the Nature of Man, and is called Patience. A little after you tell us, "Our Hero Job, (the Patient of the Text) being plundered of his Estate, and bereaved of his Children, shows a just Resentment of these severe Dispensations." A pretty Stile for a Sermon!

* By Person he means Life.

I am sorry to find you so unacquainted with your Bible, as not to know that St. James, ch. iv. 7. has told us, that *if we resist the Devil he will flee from us* : Had you known this, I suppose you would not have told us, P. 5. "*That the Devil, according to his usual Way, after being once defeated, returns to the Assault with fresh Vigor and additional Strength*;" unless perhaps this was asserted in order to introduce the mighty pretty Simile that follows : "*Temptations, like Waves, commonly break in upon us, and commonly the last is the biggest, and goes the farthest.*" Did you ever see such Waves? One would rather imagine the last to be the least.

We have the Thoughts that supported Job expressly recorded, *What, shall we receive Good at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive Evil?* Yet you are pleased to furnish him with Considerations which you have made of such a Nature as would best help to destroy Inoculation, P. 7.

As you find Thoughts for Job, so you discover Reasons for the Almighty to act upon. He must then send Diseases for the Causes which you are pleased to assign. They must be principally designed to try our Faith, or punish our Sins. How many other and better Reasons for inflicting Diseases lie conceal'd in the Divine Wisdom is unknown to you; and therefore 'tis too presumptuous to tell us those must be the principal ones, especially, when many Diseases, particularly of Children, do not correspond to these Causes.

P. 8. You affirm, that "*the Religion of the greatest part of Mankind is perfectly accidental, according to the Country they happen'd to be in.*" You don't forget, I hope, that your own is exactly conformable to the Injunctions of the Church. And so great is the Deference you pay to an
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Establishment, that, P. 14. you tell us your Opinion; *Men cannot easily be reconciled to Inoculation, since it is contrary to the Principles which are establish'd among us.*

'Tis said, Psalm 7. 8, 9. *The Children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying Bows, turned back in the Day of Battel.* Whereupon you prettily tell us, *Men carry their Religious Profession, as the Children of Ephraim did their Bows and Arrows, which they knew not how to use in the Day of Battel.*

You suppose, P. 11. *God does not afflict Men merely for the sake of correcting them; and yet this is Part of your Enlargement under that Head: Diseases are sent for the Punishment of our Sins.* And a little before, we are required to *examine, whether our Diseases are sent to correct us.* So clear are your Notions upon this Head.

Because habitual Drunkenness will ruin Health, impair Estates, and induce a distemper'd old Age, you very roundly assert, P. 11. *that Adultery does so too; whereas the evil Consequences which attend that Sin are of another Kind.* I mention this, because when you attempt to deter Men from Vice only by threatening Evils, which they know seldom or never attend the Crime, they are too apt to run into such Vices, and expose themselves to the untold Mischiefs; trusting that no Danger will follow, because they know that which was mention'd does not ensue.

Our Saviour, upon the mention of the unhappy *Galileans*, and those who perished by the Fall of the *Tower of Siloam*, has forbid us to esteem those the greatest Sinners, who suffer the most remarkable Calamities. And were other Instances of oppress'd Virtue wanting, the Case of *Job* is a flagrant Proof, that a good Man may suffer in his Estate, his Children, and his Person. And

therefore we should be very cautious of asserting, that a remarkable Calamity points out uncommon Guilt. And yet you are pleased to make these surprizing Shocks of Providence the Marks of God's extraordinary Displeasure: "*Some Sins,*" say you, *P. 11. it pleases God to strike immediately in a more remarkable manner.*" And these you oppose to the "*others, which do naturally and by degrees advance to Punishment.*" Pray, what Sins are they, which do occasion these uncommon and remarkable Shocks of Heaven? Or why should you imagine these extraordinary Events are designed to point out the Guilt of the Person to whom they happen? Do you never see the Innocent suffer?

The *Pharisees* of Old imagined, that to conform to the Letter of the Law, was paying a perfect Obedience to the Divine Statutes; that if they abstained from the external Act, they fully obey'd the Commandment of God, and nothing that pass'd in their Mind could in the least render them guilty. But after our Saviour has so fully rectified this Mistake, 'tis surprizing to hear any Man, who believes the Bible, and is acquainted with it, asserting, That Persons may be virtuous, even when a vicious Inclination has prevail'd so far, as to get the better of his Duty. Read your own Words: *P. 12. "A little Recollection will tell a Man, whether he has not been kept virtuous, when Inclination has got the better of his Duty."* You must be strangely ignorant of the true Nature of Virtue, to call any Action virtuous, which does not proceed from an inward Love and secret Taste of what is just and beautiful in Life. A virtuous Man, who wants good Inclinations, is as conceivable, as a Globe without Roundness, or a true Christian without Charity.

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You must suppose the Temper and Disposition of the Mind has no Share in rendering an Action morally good, otherwise you could never say a Man has been kept virtuous, while a vicious Disposition got the Ascendant of his Duty; especially since we are told, P. 16. "*That to make an Action good, it is necessary all its Parts be good; whereas the Depravity of any one is sufficient to denominate the whole Action evil.*" Good Inclinations therefore, according to you, don't belong to true Goodness, otherwise a Man could not be virtuous who wanted them, which you tell us he may be, even when a vicious one gets the better of his Duty. And tho' we are told, P. 20. when it served the present Turn, *that lascivious Thoughts are forbid by the Seventh Command*; yet here we are told, *Inclination may even get the better of Duty, and we be left virtuous all the while.* So clear and consistent are your Notions concerning the very Nature of Virtue and Vice.

In your next Paragraph you sagely remark, *That if things were so awkwardly constituted, that Vice was the certain Road to Happiness, no doubt Men would chuse it: And therefore such wholesome Severities as Diseases, are great Blessings, since the Fear of them restrains us from certain Vices.* I own indeed this happens in many Diseases, but there are others of them which are the Lot of the Righteous, as well as the Rod of the Wicked: And among this Sort, the Small-Pox, which you represent as a Discouragement to Wickedness, is justly number'd; and therefore cannot properly be reckon'd a Motive against Sin, any more than the Falling of a Tile that should dash a Man's Brains out, or any the most casual Death, can be look'd upon as Arguments against any particular Sin: None but those Evils the Wicked suffer, as

the natural Consequence of their Vice, or by a declared arbitrary Infliction of Heaven, are Discouragements to that Vice.

I remark'd before, how little the Instances of Diseases inflicted by *Moses* and *Elisha* were to your Purpose : But I must now take occasion of exhorting you to be more conversant with your Bible ; and inform your self, that there are more Instances of the Infliction of Diseases upon Men, besides those on the *Egyptians* and *Gebazi*, which you tell us *are the only ones you are, as yet, acquainted with* : You having never read, that *Elimas* the Sorcerer was struck blind ; or in the next Chapter to that where *Gebazi's* Case is recorded, that there was a like Instance upon a whole Army, whom *Elisha* smites with Blindness. Many others might be mentioned, but I shall only produce one, which will make you bite your Nails to think you omitted ; 'tis the Case of *Uzziah*, recorded 2 *Chron.* 26. whom the Chief Priest smites with Leprosy for being wroth with the Priests, and having a Censer in his Hand to burn Incense, v. 19. *Gebazi*, in his Master's Name, tho' without his Orders, received a Present from *Naaman*, which he endeavoured to conceal with a Lye ; and you proclaim to the World, that you have so little Sense, or so much of the Priest, as to name this *Sacrilege*. But you will go on to make your Ignorance known, by setting up for a Commentator. P. 16. You cite that Text, *Rom.* 14. 16. *Let not your good be evil spoken of ; that is, say you very judiciously, we should not do any unwarrantable Action, for the sake of any subsequent Benefit.* Whereas the Apostle's plain Meaning is, that we should not do any thing, tho' innocent and lawful in it self, which will blast our Reputation, and offend our weak Bro-

ther. Ver. 14. *I know, and am persuaded there is nothing unclean of its self but to him that esteemeth it unclean, it is unclean.* And then he adds, That altho' the Thing be not criminal in its self, yet we ought to abstain if it offends a weak Brother.

Ver. 15. *If thy Brother be offended with thy Meat, now walkest thou not charitably: Destroy not him with thy Meat, for whom Christ died.* Then come in the Words you quote, *Let not your good be evil spoken of.* Do not an Action good in it self, but which will be Matter of Offence to thy Brother; and which he will speak evil of. And yet you tell us the Meaning is, *We should not do any Evil, to produce a subsequent Good.* So just an Expositor are you on the Bible. After this we shall be less surprized to find that Text, Deut. 6. 16. *thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,* made use of against Inoculation. For if you don't know the Difference between doing Good, and doing Evil to produce Good, it is no Wonder you should confound the Remedy with the Disease. No one could imagine, that to use a Preservative, tho' an unpleasant one, against a fatal Disease, can be called tempting of God. Unnecessarily to expose our selves to any Danger, or fearfully to neglect any Method of Preservation, is indeed to tempt God.

Did I not observe a great deal of laboured Obscurity in the Style of almost every Sentence, I should imagine you had scribbled over your Sermon in a hurry, and never permitted your self to dwell upon any Thought in it. Otherwise, how could you, whose Lips should preserve Knowledge, suffer so many ignorant Blunders to escape you, or allow your self to treat worthy Gentlemen with so much ill Manners, and be so lavish in scurrilous Language upon them. I am
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persuaded, unless you are hardened to the last Degree, you will take the first Opportunity to acknowledge your Blunders in Casuistry and Divinity, and beg Pardon for your Failure in Point of Civility. Can you imagine so severe Words were necessary, or could answer any good End?

P. 14. *Inoculation is a Practice, that abuses our Understanding as well as insults our Religion; has its Foundation in Ignorance, and must be maintained, if at all, by Presumption.* And in the next, those who promoted the Method are *adventurous Practitioners of a Diabolical Operation.* And a little after, you apply to them what Job asserted of his Friends, that *they were Forgers of Lies, and Physicians of no Value,* P. 28. *They are foolish and unskilful Men.* That Practice which just now was a Distrust of Providence, is now wrought up to an Antiprovidential Project; nay P. 22. it rises to *Idolatry.*

It is no wonder that they who forward the Practice should fall under your Resentment, when you are so far enraged against those who submit to it, as to enroll them among Atheists and Scoffers, tho' so great a Part of the Christian Church successfully use this Method.

But as if all your Calumny and Reproach were less than the Gentlemen you oppose deserved, your next Endeavour is to practise some wholesome Severities upon them; and tho' you tell us, P. 19. *It is our Happiness that rational Enquiries are encouraged among us,* yet you seem uneasy till these Gentlemen are silenced by Authority, expelled the College, and deprived of their Title. P. 19. *I hope the Time is coming, when these Venefici, (prettily translated!) these Spreaders of Infection, will be distinguished from those of the Faculty who deserve Honour, and not be permitted to mingle*

gle with them, as the Devil among the Sons of God.

And now, Sir, upon the whole, don't you think you were a very improper Person to engage in this Controversy; and that you have managed it in an Unchristian as well as an Ignorant Manner. Never once fairly to state the Controversy, but contradict most notorious Facts that plead in Favour of the Method you oppose; to stuff a Sermon with so many palpable Contradictions; to be guilty of so many Blunders in your own Profession, and to intrude your self into a Dispute in a Science, of which your Ignorance is almost as great as it is of your Bible; to advance so little for the Cause you espouse, and yet to treat your Adversaries with so much Scorn and Contempt, and load them with so much Slander and Reproach, is such Behaviour as every Gentleman or Christian would abhor. As for my self, perhaps asserting I am a saucy Blockhead, nay a Wizard, an Atheist, a Devil, may be the safest Way of answering my Letter. But I can assure you, I am unconcerned about my self, if you do but make a just Satisfaction to the Gentlemen you have so publickly abused, and affronted. I can assure you, I am one who never practised Inoculation, nor have had any Hand in promoting it; and therefore am not a Party in the Cause. You can't think the Treatment you have receiv'd from me at all unjust, since your self set so notable an Example. You will be pleased to remember, that your Performance has all the Advantages which your famous Name can give it: Mine must suffer all the Disadvantages of being the anonymous Offspring of one who heartily wishes you more Understanding and less Assurance; and is,

Your Humble Servant, &c.

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